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ORAL-0210

Copy 4 of 5.

18 July 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR : Special Assistant to the Director  
for Planning and Development

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SUBJECT : Discussion with Gen. Cabell on 17 July re  
CHALICE Operations [redacted]

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1. On 17 July a message came in [redacted] recommending that [redacted] be postponed in view of the Middle East situation. After staff discussion, I took this message to Gen. Cabell and he concurred in the postponement and advised that the timing for future activation of [redacted] would be at your discretion.

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2. Plans have been completed to furnish [redacted] an additional aircraft with departure from the ZI on 23 July, staging [redacted] to Adana. I told Gen. Cabell that unless he had some objection we would ferry this aircraft to Adana as scheduled. He concurred.

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3. With regard to Middle East coverage, Admiral Frost had previously been advised by Gen. Cabell that we would provide daily surveillance of Alexandria harbor. Gen. Cabell asked how this was going and stated the daily coverage should continue until Admiral Frost indicated no further requirement. I advised that barring weather difficulties the coverage would continue and that unless he, Gen. Cabell, were advised differently, he could assume this requirement was being fulfilled. I mentioned two circumstances in which we would propose to cancel the daily sorties: (1) Contrails seemed to be getting higher and higher, for example 67,000 from Adana to Alexandria as of 17 July. In the event contrails were forecast which would give away the mission, we would cancel. (2) Of course if weather at Adana was forecast to be poor, the unit commander would cancel. In each case Gen. Cabell would be informed that we had cancelled. Gen. Cabell has had two discussions with Adm. Frost during this week and I felt it would be well to read Gen. Cabell in since he personally made this specific commitment.

4. Gen. Cabell asked concerning the two accidents at Del Rio. I advised him we had an informal opinion from SAC to the effect that oxygen or oxygen system contamination by moisture was a likely suspect, and PE, either aircraft or personal, was a second likely cause. The Board has not completed its investigation and as of 18 July is waiting for delivery of aircraft systems from the U-2's involved. I gave to Gen. Cabell as my opinion that lack of quality maintenance

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or destroy

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was certainly a factor. This opinion is based on verbal reports such as kinked hoses on ejection seats, excessive pressures required to trigger seat, and oxygen contamination found in other aircraft parked on the ramp at Del Rio. We have kept the detachments informed with regard to precautions and suspected difficulties as the investigation has proceeded.

5. Gen. Cabell was most concerned about the erroneous articles which have appeared concerning the grounding of SAC U-2's. He felt that even if true, some sort of retraction should be publicly made indicating that they were not grounded. Through Maj. Clark Sykes SAC (Col. Dave Williams) was requested to take action in this regard. As of this date this action is incomplete. On 18 July we were informed that in all likelihood the Del Rio U-2's would be flying beginning Wednesday, 23 July.

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WILLIAM FURKS  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy Director, DPS/DCI

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